

**BRATTLEBORO TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, MARCH 27, 2012 – 8:30AM
MINUTES**

Members present: Town Manager Barb Sondag, Betsy Gentile from Windham Southeast Supervisory Union, Public Works Director Steve Barrett, Police Chief Gene Wrinn, Planning Director Rod Francis and Robert Immler.

Selectboard representative present: David Gartenstein.

Additional staff present: Police Captain Mike Fitzgerald.

Media present: Howard Weiss-Tisman representing the Brattleboro Reformer.

Others present: Peter Putnam, Bob Remy-Powers, Robert Szpila, Betty Henry, Mike Henry, Dick Guthrie, Matt Mann, Jennifer Smith, Chloe Learey, Jean Gilbert, Julie Potter, Jerry Rounds, Terry Carter and others who did not sign the attendance sheet.

Town Manager Sondag called the meeting to order at 8:34am in the Selectboard meeting room. Minutes from the February 28, 2012 meeting were presented.

MOTION BY BETSY GENTILE, AND SECONDED, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 28, 2012 MEETING. MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

Sidewalk Plowing – Western Avenue, Continue Discussion. Steve Barrett distributed and discussed winter sidewalk plow routes with particular focus on Western Avenue. There was discussion about the organization and routes of sidewalk plows, staff and equipment limitations, ordinance requirement for the downtown area, effect of budget cutbacks and communication between neighbors and citizens to clear their sidewalks. Jennifer Smith voiced her concerns about snow on sidewalks on Western Avenue. It was requested that Barrett obtain information on the cost of additional staff and equipment to increase the number of sidewalks to be plowed and obtain information from other towns, and to have a further discussion in another month or two.

Pedestrian and Vehicular Safety – Continue Discussion. Sondag provided the Committee with a memo containing updated information regarding pedestrian-vehicle-bicycle safety and she discussed the various aspects of it, including mapping crosswalks with an overlay of street lights, the AARP study, WRC assistance, policies regarding crosswalks and integrated and coordinated educational campaign with agencies. Barrett said DPW was working with the Energy Committee to review the transition from old street lights to LED lights and compare the different type of light provided by LEDs. Matt Mann discussed sidewalk criteria considered by the State, including speed of traffic, existing crosswalk use, inside distances between traffic lights and gap distances between cars. Rod Francis discussed the recent AARP and Dan Burden workshop which focused on improving bicycle and pedestrian safety on Canal Street from Maple Street to Price Chopper, with a focal point being the crosswalk at the intersections of Belmont & Canal Streets. Gene Wrinn said that funds from the Governor Highway Safety Grant was being redirected to focus on drivers' failure to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, pedestrians' failure to yield to vehicles and general safety guidelines education. Jennifer Smith, Dick Guthrie, Jerry Rounds, Mike Henry, Chloe Leary, Peter Putnam and others were present and discussed their concerns regarding crosswalks at Academy School and in other areas of Town, traffic speed in the Academy School area and on Guilford Street, maintenance and changes on State highway portions of roads, improving the intersection at Whipple and Green Streets, sidewalks blocked by hedges, traffic issues near Citizens' Bridge, consistency of speed limits in school areas and other general areas of concerns.

There was substantial discussion by the Committee about concerns voiced by the public at the meeting, the lighting, location and design of crosswalks, LED street lights, maintenance of and alterations to State highways, dangers in the area of Academy School, increasing driver and pedestrian awareness, installing bollards and barrels in crosswalks around Town and at Academy School, additional signage, school and parental involvement, driver-pedestrian-bicycle educational campaigns, enforcement of vehicular and pedestrian laws, and how the Committee should proceed. Sondag said that she was scheduled to meet

with other agencies and groups to discuss pedestrian and traffic safety, determine what processes were already in place and discuss integrating and coordinating different components into a unified effort to develop concrete plans and prioritize projects. She asked the Academy School officials to accompany elementary students across Western Avenue when students stay later than the crossing guards. She suggested that the Committee look to determine criteria and processes around crosswalk issues. Gartenstein asked that the administration continue to review mapping street lights and crosswalks and to present a plan to the Committee with its recommendations for re-evaluating design, lighting and placement of crosswalks, timing and content of an educational campaign and a schedule or mechanism to address areas of concern around Guilford Street and Academy School. He also suggested that the Committee address the two action items in Sondag's memo, specifically determine a process to identify areas to study in accordance with the AARP/Dan Burden workshop, and review regulations used by the State in order to adopt criteria and determine where crosswalks should be placed.

It was agreed to discuss the matter further at the next meeting. There was no further business.

**MOTION BY DAVID GARTENSTEIN, AND SECONDED BY BETSY GENTILE, TO ADJOURN.
MOTION WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.**